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of our native bees, wasps, flies, beetles, butterflies and moths, bugs and grasshoppers and Neuroptera, an immense impetus would be given to the study of entomology. As it is, we fear that the twentieth century will be far advanced before these desirable works will be published.

ROBINSON'S FLORA OF ESSEX COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS.¹—Essex county enjoys the distinction of being at an early date one of the botanical centers of the United States, as it was the home of Dr. Manasseh Cutler, Dr. George Osgood, Dr. Andrew Nichols, Dr. Charles Pickering and, more particularly, of William Oakes, to whose memory the genus *Oakesia* has recently been dedicated by Mr. Sereno Watson. The names also of Rev. John L. Russell and Mr. Geo. D. Phippen, Mr. S. B. Buttick, and of others, should be mentioned; while Mr. C. M. Tracy, in his Flora of Lynn, was the first to publish a list of Essex county plants. These and other facts are related by our author in the historical introduction to his Flora. It appears that originally almost the only extended collection of dried Essex county plants were those of the late Mr. Oakes, but the list before us is based upon the herbarium recently collected by Mr. Robinson, and nearly all of which is represented in that of the Peabody Academy of Science, at Salem. The notes under the specific names are quite full and interesting as regards the flowering plants; the enumeration of mosses and thallophytes, in which the author was assisted by other botanists, is less complete. We would like to have seen a more detailed bibliography, *i. e.*, the titles given in full, with complete references to articles by the earlier botanists, of which the titles and dates are not always given; only the name, without the date, of the magazines or transactions containing them. But this is a minor blemish. The undertaking has been well carried out, the volume is a handsome one, and it will be a *vade mecum* to the herbalist of eastern New England.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE ON ANALYSES OF INKS.—A committee of the Franklin Institute was appointed by a vote of that body at its November meeting, for the purpose of examining into the truth of certain statements made and the value of certain tests proposed for the detection of iron in inks. The object of the appointment was stated to be that during the interval of time which should elapse between now and the legal remedy of the expert abuse in court, an extra judicial court might criticise all statements professing to be scientific and the fear of reversal before their peers might be an additional security for the value of expert statements.

The committee resolves "that inasmuch as the methods for the detection of iron in inks and for the identification of inks are described in numerous and well-known works on chemistry; and inasmuch as the chemical expert testimony in the Whittaker

¹ The Flora of Essex county, Massachusetts. JOHN ROBINSON, Salem. Essex Institute, 1880. 8° pp. 200.

"will case contains nothing new of scientific interest, your committee beg to be relieved of further consideration of the subject. Resolved, That we call the attention of the Franklin Institute to the numerous objections to which expert investigations are open, when undertaken as at present by parties securing the services and interested in the decision of the court, and we earnestly recommend that the Franklin Institute takes such action that the change from the present plan may become a subject of legal enactment." The signers of this remarkable production are Dr. W. H. Greene, Dr. Geo. A. Koenig, Dr. Wm. H. Wahl, Mr. Moody, Mr. Pemberton, Sr., and Dr. Isaac Norris.

The humorous points of this report cannot be better appreciated than by comparing it with the statements of some of those experts whose testimony the committee was to examine. Compare the first "inasmuch" with this by the ex-President of the Franklin Institute, Prof. R. E. Rogers: "I don't recall in any of our chemical books a direction for examining writing for iron. I do not know a single authority" (Wed., April 14, 1880, 54th day, p. 6469). Dr. Genth says: "I do not believe anybody has ever made any experiment in that direction" (*i. e.*, the conditions under which potassium ferrocyanide and sulphuric acid react on each other). The second "inasmuch" is equally opposed to the testimony.

Committee's Report.—"And inasmuch as the chemical expert testimony in the Whittaker Will case contains nothing new of scientific interest—"

Dr. Rogers.—"It has been entirely overlooked by the writers of the text books that these reagents" (*i. e.*, potassium ferrocyanide and potassium sulphocyanide.) "are not sufficiently refined for the nice determination of the presence or absence of iron" (p. 6420).

—"There may be writing which contains iron that * * tested for iron by the method which has been adopted will fail to show the presence of iron" (6430).

—"The 'fire test' devised by Dr. Rogers for determining iron in inks and pronounced the 'most rigorous' (p. 6438-9).

Mr. Johnson.—"Professor, is the fire test stated in the books?" "No, sir." "Then it is a result from your own original experimenting?" "Yes, sir" (p. 6470).

—*Mr. Johnson.*—"But they do see that there is a blue, the result of the mixture?"

Dr. Rogers.—"Of what?"

Mr. Johnson.—"Of the sulphuric acid and ferrocyanide of potassium."

Dr. Rogers.—"No, they do not. I don't think such a thing has been observed generally."

Mr. J.—"When you put them in one bottle, how can you avoid it?"

Dr. Rogers.—"They are not put in one bottle."

Mr. J.—"Suppose they are."

Dr. R.—"I have never known them to be put in one bottle, except instances in which I have done it" (p. 6497).

It will sufficiently appear from the above that either the distinguished representatives of chemistry in the University of Pennsylvania and the Jefferson College are mistaken or else great chemical discoveries have been the result of the Whittaker will trial. The advice of the committee does not seem to be *apropos* to anything; as its reason for not undertaking the duty assigned to it, viz.: that the duty would not be profitable, seems to be gratuitous. The whole report is a very good illustration of "how not to do it."—*Persifor Frazer*.

OUTLINES OF LINGUISTIC SCIENCE.¹—In what has appeared of the second volume of his "outline of linguistic science," the celebrated Austrian linguist has given to the world a series of short, but lucid sketches of the languages of Eastern Siberia, not belonging to the Ural-Altaic family; of Ale-ut, Eskimo and also of the whole Malay-Polynesian family scattered over the whole Pacific ocean. The languages of Western and Southern Africa was disposed of in the first volume, and in one of the next numbers the author will reach the American languages.

MOLINA'S DICTIONARY OF THE AZTEC LANGUAGE.²—This work is a most praiseworthy republication of the second edition of Molina (1571), the only copious dictionary which exists on the Aztec language. To students, who were almost discouraged by the high price of the original, this republication is now offered at a moderate figure (50 marks in Leipzig, unbound) and will enable them to study the sonorous Aztec tongue from the best authority in existence. The volume contains over 50,000 terms.

RECENT BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.—*Sur l'uniformité de la Nomenclature Géologique dans tous les pays, en ce qui regarde les Terrains et les Etages.* (Ext. du Compte Rendu Sténographique du Congrès International de Géologie, 1878.) Par M. Stéphanesco. 8vo, pp. 4, 1880. From the author.

Some Copper Deposits of Carroll county, Maryland. By Persifor Frazer. 8vo, pp. 8. Maps 1, 1880. From the author.

Extraits de Géologie pour les années 1877 et 1878. (Ext. des Ann. des Mines, 1880.) Par MM. Delesse et de Lapparent. 8vo, pp. 242. Paris, 1880. From the authors.

The Food of Fishes. (From Bull. No. 3, Ill. State Lab. Nat. Hist., November, 1880.) By S. A. Forbes. 8vo, pp. 61. From the author.

Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior on the operations of the department for the year ending June 30, 1880. 8vo, pp. 81. From the department.

Drug Adulterations. By S. V. Clevenger. (From the Druggist for December, 1880.) pp. 7. From the author.

Cerebral Anatomy Simplified by Comparative Anatomy Studies by S. V. Clevenger, (From the Chicago Med. Journ. and Examiner for November, 1880.) 8vo, pp. 9. From the author.

Erster Nachtrag zum Katalog der herpetologischen Sammlung des Basler Museums. Von F. Müller. 8vo, pp. 49, pl. 1. 1880. From the author.

¹ Dr. Friedr. Müller, *Grundriss der Sprachwissenschaft*. Vol. II, No. 1^a. 2^a. Wien. 1880. 8°. A. Flölder, publisher.

² Vocabulario de la lengua Mexicana, compuesto por el P. Fr. Alonso de Molina; publicado de nuevo por Julio Platzmann. Edición facsímil. Leipzig, B. G. Teubner. 1880. 4°. Parte I. Castell.-Mexic. 121 double pages. Parte II. Mexic.-Castell. 162 double pages, of two columns each.